

# CABLE AND COMMUNICATIONS ADVISORY COMMITTEE

## Meeting Minutes

**Date:** 03/24/2010

**Location:** Council Office Building, Room 250

**Committee Attendance:** Mark Berman, Jay Boyar, Trish Evans, Jose Zegarra Holder, Bing Kung, Mona Hall McKenzie, Suzanne Weiss and Noreene Wells. **Absent:** Kelly Cameron, Alex Cohen, Treffaney Lowe and Grant Moy. **PEG:** Dick Lipsky, Melissa Pace and Merlyn Reineke. **Cable Office Staff:** Mitsuko Herrera and Keith Watkins.

### Approval of Previous Meeting Minutes

- Review and approval of the agenda.
- Review and approval of meeting minutes.

### PEG Presentations

- Merlyn Reineke, Access Montgomery, Dick Lipsky, Montgomery County Public Schools and Melissa Pace, Montgomery College provided the committee with budget presentations, updates with regards to progress in the midst of challenges they face due to the economy for each of their respective organizations. Mitsuko gave the committee an overview of changes that will affect CCM (County Cable Montgomery) as a result of budget cuts.
- Suzanne asked what the committee could do to support the PEGs. Mitsuko responded that the topic of the growing Cable Fund contribution to the General Fund should be a primary concern. She also offered to have the Cable Office assist with preparing testimony and talking points for the MFP meeting scheduled for Wednesday, April 14<sup>th</sup>, encouraged the committee to schedule meetings to meet with the Council Analyst, Dr. Costis Toregas and Council Members. A packet should be put together to include written letters of support from community organizations. Mitsuko advised that the more information Council is provided with at these public hearings the better. Mitsuko also shared with the committee the difficulties and challenges she faced since managers were not allowed to notify employees affected by the recent cuts. Discussion ensued.

### New Business

- Trish thanked Mitsuko for sending out the quarterly reports. Mitsuko mentioned that during the MFP session Councilmember Navarro was very pleased with the creation of the International Channel. There was also some discussion about setting targets on the scorecard but this issue will be readdressed at the meeting slated for July. Mitsuko was also reminded that the purpose of the scorecard is to assist consumers to compare and make decisions. As a result the Cable Office is looking into the cost associated with posting some of the data from the score card into a one page document on the web site. Also as part of our renewal the Cable Office is also looking into creating a survey of customer satisfaction website. Whether the cost for this will be incurred by the cable providers or the Cable Fund is undetermined and third the county would send out a residential survey which would include a more robust cable and broadband satisfaction and cable serviceability. Trish suggested utilizing the Montgomery County list serves which would reduce costs and target a different audience thereby maximizing the use of the systems currently in place. She also suggested that in addition the Cable Office should find a way of letting constituents know about the services Keith Watkins provides. Discussion ensued.
- Mitsuko reported that complaints are down and commended Keith Watkins and Marjorie Williams for the work done on revamping the inspection program. She also added that Keith is involved in the creation of the knowledge base questionnaire for the MC311 system. The date of the hard launch of the MC311 system has been delayed.

- Trish posed the question to each committee member on where they would like to see the committee go. She suggested a brain storming session as a means to accomplish this. Suzanne added it would be beneficial if members could put in writing their ideas and exchange via email.
- Mitsuko's shared concerns regarding the possibility of a request for more cuts in FY11. A review of revenue projections and estimation of growth for each provider revealed that the Cable Office is below the fund policy. Revenue projections were based on the second quarter data and rate increases were not included. Jose asked how fees and taxes were calculated. Mitsuko responded that the answer to this question is provider-specific. She further explained how franchise and PEG fees for use of the public right-of-way are calculated by provider. Discussion ensued.
- The decision was made to make budget testimonies before the County Council on afternoon of Wednesday, April 7, 2010. Mitsuko will inquire about the slot/s for the members interested in participating. An e-mail requesting budget testimony ideas will be circulated to the committee.

### **Old Business**

- Suzanne addressed concerns relating to the posting of information to the website and meeting minutes.

### **Adjournment**

- Meeting adjourned at 9:00 p.m.
- Next committee meeting scheduled for Wednesday, April 28, at 7:00 p.m. in the Council Office Building (COB).

Submitted by: Andrea Gardner, Office Services Coordinator